Salem County Department of Health and Human Services

COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS & HEALTH EDUCATION

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NEWS RELEASE

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Winners Announced in County Teen Video Contest

Teens from Pennsville and Schalick high schools were recognized for their winning submissions in the "Are You Talkin' to Me?" video contest at the May 7th meeting of the Salem County Board of Chosen Freeholders. The videos were shown at the meeting, and 25 teens from the County high schools who took part in the contest were awarded proclamation.

Teens from local high schools were invited to create a video that focused on parent-child communication about adolescent sexual health topics. The purpose of the contest was to find out what teenagers thought about these conversations. The entries ranged from humorous to heartfelt and honest.

Three videos were chosen as the top three and all participants were invited to the Board of Chosen Freeholders' meeting on May 7, 2014 to be recognized by the Board for their participation. The Board of Chosen Freeholders also declared May the National Month to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, in honor of the National Day to Prevent Teen Pregnancy on May 7th.

First place went to Brittney Rodriguez from Pittsgrove Township's Schalick High School. Her video focused on how her mother approached talking to her about sex and her top three tips for parents. Second place went to Paige Dowell, Taylor Hitt, and Raelyn Hoyle from Pennsville High School who took the opportunity to talk about a very real life situation that one of the participants experienced. She took this experience and used it as a learning opportunity for other parents and teens. Third place went to Jamie Crescenzi, Darcey Falen, and Brianna Weaver from Pennsville High School who took a humorous approach to the reality that is the "Birds and the Bees" talk and gave us a view inside the mind of a teen while this conversation happens.

"This creative project in the Department of Health & Human Services is focused on helping parents and children communicate better about sensitive topics. The opinions of our young people are important to consider, as they can help us with the solution to improved family discussions," said Freeholder Bob Vanderslice, who chairs of the Health & Human Services Committee.

"The messages in these videos were so thought-provoking," said Freeholder Director Julie Acton. "I went home and continued to think about the impact of each of the award winning videos. These videos will be an excellent catalyst for discussion with the parent groups."

The Department of Health and Human Services plans to take all of the video clips from the contest and use the student's input in developing workshops for parents that will focus on increasing parent-child communication and parent's knowledge of sexual health topics. These workshops are scheduled to begin in the Fall and there will be a workshop in each area of the county so the group can reach as many parents as possible. This project is funded by the Salem Health & Wellness Foundation's Healthy Kids/Bright Futures Teen Pregnancy initiative.

For more information, contact Sarah Miller at 856-935-7510 ext. 8302. You can also learn more about the project at SalemCountyNJ.gov/Health or at Facebook.com/SalemCountyHealth.